

**Minutes of the
Winnebago County Mental Health Advisory Committee
Wednesday, April 8, 2015 @ 7:30 a.m.
Rosecrance Center, 1021 North Mulford Road, Rockford, IL**

Present: Dick Kunnert, Donny Parham, Dr. Charles Smith, Angie Goral, Matt Toohey, Phil Eaton

Others Present: Georgette Braun, Melissa Westphal, Harlan Johnson, Dr. Penny Billman, Peggy Lee (UU Church), and Mike Bacon

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called order at approximately 7:35 am. All were welcomed to the meeting. Mr. Bacon requested any additions or changes to the agenda. There were none.

UPDATE FROM TEAMS (i.e. DATA/SURVEY, MESSAGING/MARKETING, FUNDING AND RECOMMENDATIONS):

Dick Kunnert and Matt Toohey provided an overview of the System analysis subcommittee that has been meeting to develop a survey instrument and methodology to assess the current capacity for the behavioral health system in the community. Phil Eaton and Dr. Billman added additional comments. All indicated the need for a meeting that includes Dr. Martell who was going to assist in streamlining the format for the survey. Mr. Bacon was to relay the need for this meeting.

The discussion evolved into a review of examples of fragmentation of the current service structure in the community. Dr. Smith and Mr. Eaton both pointed out the challenges in addressing the treatment and follow-up needs of those with substance abuse disorders. The emphasis here was on the importance of developing a system that functions across all stakeholder organizations including the law-enforcement / criminal justice part of the system and leveraging their ability to connect those in need to such services. The behavioral health intercept model was discussed and progress that has been made in addressing the behavior health needs of those who have been part of the criminal justice system (e.g. Center of Excellence).

Mr. Parham pointed out the challenges in developing a failsafe system that assures all that need a connection to the Triage Center or other parts of the behavioral health service structure are indeed made where indicated. This should be routine, but sometimes important connections don't get made. Some of this represents an ongoing training need (e.g. Crisis Intervention Training) across the system and minimum competencies to be achieved at all levels.

Dr. Smith mentioned the lack of broad support and understanding of the benefits of behavioral health prevention and interventions in general. This reflects a lack of local capacity to provide ongoing community awareness and advocacy on the benefits and cost-effectiveness of such endeavors and the types of resources needed. The value of preventive interventions / outreach / awareness in suicide prevention was referred to as well. Mr. Kunnert pointed out the simple connection that our frontline law-enforcement officers could be better protected (i.e. safer) in responding to community needs if there was greater awareness and capacity to more comprehensively serve the behavioral health needs of Winnebago County.

There was a consensus around the need to improve community awareness not just on local behavioral health service limitations but on the benefits of having a functioning behavioral health system. Phil Eaton encouraged the development of an agenda for a facilitated dialogue on this topic. Dick Kunnert moved to do this, with Matt Toohey seconding. Angie Goral mention the utility of working with existing organization that also have such interest. There was no further discussion and a vote was taken with all members voting aye to support developing a means to facilitate such a dialogue.

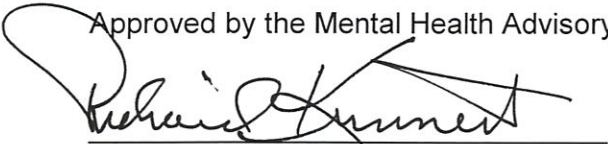
OTHER MATTERS:

Mr. Toohey brought to everyone's attention that on May 7 there will be a forum of human service providers hosted at Rockford University's Center for nonprofit excellence. He encouraged all to attend. Mr. Toohey is also serving on a behavioral health subcommittee of the Rockford Health Council. They are currently in the process of developing a plan of action to address behavior health needs in the community. This is based on the current behavioral health needs identified in the most recent community health assessment. Dick Kunnert moved to have Matt represent the MHAC on this Committee. This motion was seconded by Donny Parham with all members voting aye.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the MHAC will be May 8, 7:30 AM, Rosecrance Center, North Mulford location. There being no further business the meeting adjourned at approximately 845 a.m.

Approved by the Mental Health Advisory Committee: 21 May 2015
DATE



Richard Kunnert, Secretary
Winnebago County Mental Health Advisory Committee